



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire*

*Federal Building
55 Pleasant Street, Room 312
Concord, New Hampshire 03301*

603/225-1552

MEDIA RELEASE
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Contact: Thomas P. Colantuono
United States Attorney
Robert J. Veiga
Assistant U. S. Attorney
(603) 225-1552

**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA ("HIDTA") TASK FORCE**

GROUP PLEADS GUILTY TO COCAINE DISTRIBUTION

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE: United States Attorney Tom Colantuono, DEA Resident Agent in Charge Leo Ducey, New Hampshire Attorney General Kelly Ayotte, and the United States Postal Inspector of the United States Postal Inspection Service Kenneth R. Jones, announced that **Margaret Barcus**, age 30, of Pittsfield, New Hampshire, her sister **Corina Barcus**, age 31, of Manchester, NH, and **Gerald Strickland**, age 47, of Fresno, California, pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in connection with the Possession of Methamphetamine with Intent to Distribute and Use of the Mail to Commit a Controlled Substance Offense.

The charges filed by the United States allege that Margaret Barcus, Cornia Barcus, and Gerald Strickland each possessed with intent to distribute 47.26 grams of the drug on April 9, 2004 and that the entire scheme involved between 200 to 300 grams.

Margaret Barcus admitted her guilt yesterday, September 20, 2004 to the charges during a hearing before U.S. District Judge Joseph A. DiClerico, Jr. She was ordered to surrender for a sentencing hearing scheduled for December 20, 2004.

Cornia Barcus admitted her guilt today to the charges during a hearing before U.S. District Judge Steven J. McAuliffe. She was detained pending a sentencing hearing scheduled for December 21, 2004.

Strickland admitted his guilt today to the charges during a hearing before U.S. District Judge Joseph A. DiClerico, Jr. He was detained pending a sentencing hearing scheduled for December 21, 2004.

United States Attorney Colantuono stated, "Methamphetamine, a dangerous drug that is extremely addictive, is a growing threat in our state. It is considered one of the primary drugs

behind much of the nation's drug-related violence and reports indicate that domestic production has increased. Illicit drugs remain a threat not only to New Hampshire but to the United States and this office will continue to commit federal resources for investigations and prosecutions involving methamphetamine production and distribution.”

The successful prosecution of this case resulted from the efforts of the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England HIDTA Task Force and the NH Attorney General's Drug Task Force. This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert J. Veiga.